

NEWS RELEASE

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Secret government medical experiments warrant jail, not payoffs, say Libertarians

\$4.8 million payoff to victims' families is not real justice

WASHINGTON, DC — Jail time, not payoffs — that's the way to deal with 30 years of secret, gruesome government medical experiments, the Libertarian Party said today.

"The government should not be able to buy its way out of responsibility by paying off victims with taxpayers' money," said Steve Dasbach, chairman of America's third-largest political party. "Instead, attempted murder charges should be filed against the politicians who approved secret radioactivity, chemical, and biological experiments on innocent Americans."

Dasbach's comments came after Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary announced this week that the government would pay \$4.8 million to the families of 12 human "guinea pigs" who were injected with plutonium and uranium — without their knowledge or consent — during secret government experiments in the 1940s.

A better response, said Dasbach, would be to bring to justice the people responsible for such experiments. "Politicians, bureaucrats, and government employees should be held to the same standard as any other American," he said. "If an average citizen, for example, secretly injected people with Plutonium 239, he would be in jail facing murder charges. Instead, the government is spending \$4.8 million of our money to try to buy a clean conscience."

The use of taxpayers' money for the payoff is especially reprehensible, said Dasbach. "If compensation is warranted, it should be in the form of victim restitution from the specific individuals responsible for the crimes," he said. "Taxpayers shouldn't be punished for the crimes of politicians."

After all, noted Dasbach, American citizens have been victimized ever since the secret experiments started in 1940. "First, thousands of individuals were the subjects of horrific government experiments for more than three decades," he said. "Then, Americans were kept in the dark for another two decades while the government tried desperately to cover up its crimes. Now, we're being taxed to pay off the victims of these ghoulish experiments — while the politicians and bureaucrats who committed these crimes remain at large."

In announcing the settlement, O'Leary said the government was "grateful" to the victims for "the tough lessons they have taught us about trust, responsibility, and accountability."

"The *real* lesson this case teaches is: Government can't be trusted," countered Dasbach. "If nothing else, this case should end the myth that such atrocities can't happen in America."

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